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JENNY IN THE SNOW STORM. Page 53.

TRUST IN GOD;

OR

JENNY'S TRIALS.

BY

CATHERINE D. BELL.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

RICHMOND:

PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	Jenny and her Grandmother	5
II.	The New Mother	11
III.	A Home without Religion	22
IV.	The Great Trial	33
V.	Jenny's Long Journey	47
	Jessie's Hyacinth	60

TRUST IN GOD.

CHAPTER I.

JENNY AND HER GRANDMOTHER.

"Now, mother, what must be done at last is best done at first. So kiss her and let her go, or we'll be late for the coach," said John Carter, looking into the kitchen where his mother stood with her sobbing grandchild in her arms.

The old woman stooped and gave the girl a long, earnest kiss.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace," she said. "And, Jenny, my dear lamb, mind my words. I think that the

Lord has made ye one of his own children. Oh, mind that ye trust in him with all your heart! He may see best to bring you into sorrow and suffering, but mind ye that he'll never bring ye into sin. And however sore ye may be tempted, mind that the strength of the Almighty is on your side, if ye keep in the right road. Mind that, mind that;" and kissing her again repeatedly, she pushed her gently towards the door, and turned away.

Jenny went out of the kitchen, and out of the house, sobbing aloud as she went. Her uncle waited for her at the outer door, and, when she came out, he raised her little box on his shoulder, and set off at a quick pace down the hill without speaking. Jenny followed him, as best she might, blinded with tears, and stumbling over the stones and ruts of the rough road. When John saw that she was fairly on her way, he stopped till she came up to him, and gave her his dis

engaged hand, and tried to comfort her. Men like him, however, seldom know how to comfort a child; and when he spoke of all the fine sights she should see on her journey, Jenny's tears only flowed the faster, as she recollected that each mile was to take her farther from her dear grandmother. John's cottage was at the bottom of the hill, before entering the wood; and his wife, a kind, motherly woman, was waiting to bid them good-by, and to put into Jenny's hand some biscuits and sweet cakes, which she had made for her to eat on the long journey before her. She knew better than her husband what was most likely to soothe Jenny's grief; and the child's face did, indeed, brighten, as her aunt said,—

"And oh, Jenny, woman, won't ye be glad to see yer father again? Ye love him dearly, I know."

Yes, Jenny did love her father dearly, and that she was going to him was the only

thing that at all reconciled her to leaving her grandmother. Jenny's mother died when her little girl was only three years old; and as William Carter had no female relative to live with him and take care of his child, he had brought her to his mother, with whom Jenny had lived ever since. Old Mrs. Carter was an uncommon woman, greatly superior to the generality of women of her rank and age. Her feelings were singularly warm and true, her judgment clear and sound, and in real, living, godliness, perhaps few people were equal to her. Her God and Saviour was constantly before her mind. She lived in his presence, delighting herself in communion with him, and ordering her whole life and conversation by his word. By such a grandmother Jenny had been brought up with the utmost tenderness and unselfish love, and had been carefully trained in the knowledge and fear of God. The Lord had blessed the old lady's earnest,

faithful efforts. He had taught Jenny by his own Spirit, and had given her a new heart to love himself and to seek his ways, with all her soul.

A very happy childhood had Jenny's been in her grandmother's pretty, pleasant home, and under her grandmother's loving care and guidance. Twice every year her father had paid them a visit, and the partings from him had hitherto been the only real grief the child had known.

Some months before my story opens, William Carter had married again; and now that there was a woman in the house, he desired to have his child with him. His mother felt the reasonableness and rightness of the wish, and could not oppose Jenny's going. But her heart was heavy at parting with her darling, and deeply anxious for that darling's welfare. She knew nothing about her son's new wife; and of her son himself, she knew that, though good, kind,

and upright in all his ways, he had not given his heart to the Lord; it was not his first and greatest care that he and his should serve the Lord. She could not tell her doubts and fears to the child,—could not say any thing that might shake Jenny's reverence and love for her father. She could only impress more deeply upon her heart the duty of taking earnest heed to all her ways; of keeping her heart with all diligence. And this she had done faithfully, earnestly, prayerfully.

"I hope I may be sure that she is the Lord's child," she said, as she watched her son and grandchild down the hill; "and to the Lord do I trust her. He will be more to her than I could be, and he will never forsake her."

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW MOTHER.

JENNY'S journey was a fatiguing one. She had to walk about two miles and a half to the roadside inn, where she met the coach which was to take her the rest of the way, and where she parted from her uncle. It was still early morning when the coach started, and she did not reach the village, near which her father lived, until quite night. She was by that time sorely wearied, both in body and mind. But it was an inexpressible relief to see her father's good, kind face looking out for her, to hear his pleasant voice welcoming her, and to feel the affectionate pressure of his arms, as he lifted her down. They had some little distance to walk, for William Carter lived out

of the village; but, with her father's kind arm to lean upon, the walk in the cool night air was only a refreshment to Jenny.

It was so pleasant to her to listen to her father's fond expressions of happiness at having his lassie once more with him, to answer his questions about her journey, and about all the friends she had left, and to feel at every word that he was the very father whom she had always so dearly loved — to lose the kind of shyness with which she had been thinking of him, as if his marriage must have changed him, as if he no longer belonged so much to herself as before. The night was quite dark, but as they turned the last corner, a stream of warm, cheerful light was seen on the road a little before them.

"Ah," said William Carter, in a pleased tone, "mother has set the door open that the light may welcome us. And there," he added, as a dark shadow fell upon the light, — "there she is herself looking out for us."

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"Ah," said William Carter, in a pleased tone, "mother has set the door open that the light may welcome us. And there," he added, as a dark shadow fell upon the light, — "there she is herself looking out for us."

Again the shy feeling came over Jenny, but her father led her quickly forward. A pleasant voice cried, "Is that you, William? Has Jenny come?" and, in another instant, Jenny felt herself kindly pressed in stranger arms, and a hearty kiss on her forehead, and her new mother led her into the kitchen, where a bright fire was burning, making every thing look cheerful and pleasant. Mrs. Carter placed Jenny in an easy chair by the fire, and busied herself in taking off her bonnet and cloak in the kindest manner imaginable.

At first, Jenny could only sit still and suffer her mother to do as she liked with her, for she was confused by the sudden change from darkness to light, and giddy from fatigue and the long journey. But when Mrs. Carter had left her to get supper ready, she was able to look round a little, and try if she could recollect the house, which she had not seen for eleven years. Her father seemed to guess her thoughts.

"Ah, it isn't the same, my lass," he said, with a little sigh. "Mother thought the old place too narrow, and never rested till I had taken down the wall, and brought in the little room where we used to sleep."

"And so it was too narrow," Mrs. Carter said, briskly, as she came in from a small pantry in the rear of the house. "A body hadn't room to turn round in the old place. And where was the use of having the good, large room up-stairs standing empty in state, while we were stuffed into that little hole that you called your bedroom."

Whatever the old place had been, the present kitchen was a large, handsome room, and beautifully clean and neat. It bore few signs of being used as a kitchen. The best china was, indeed, displayed in all its glory on the shelves; but the commoner crockery in daily use, and all the cooking utensils, were put out of sight in the pantry. Jenny thought her mother's kitchen was a very

grand place; but she missed the bright pots and pans, scoured until they shone like silver, which had always seemed to her to give so much cheerfulness and pleasantness to her old home with her grandmother. She thought less about the room, however, than about its inmates. Her mother was more to her than the kitchen could be; and whenever she could do so, unobserved, she cast curious, inquiring glances upon that mother's face and figure. The result was satisfactory. Mrs. Carter was a very nice-looking woman, with a cheerful, pleasant, and, at the same time, intelligent countenance, and a light, active figure. She moved briskly about her work, as if she always knew exactly what she meant to do; and was so clean and neat, so bright and cheerful-looking, that Jenny felt she added greatly to the pleasant look of her new home. A good supper was soon set upon the table, and Jenny, placed between her father and mother, was as kindly attended

to as heart could wish. Although very much tired, and still sore at heart when she thought of the many miles which divided her from her grandmother, yet it was with much thankfulness to God and much hope of happiness that she lay down to rest that night.

The next morning her new life began in earnest. She was rested and refreshed by a good night's sleep, and able to take an active share in the household work. Old Mrs. Carter had taken great pains to teach her little granddaughter to make herself useful; and Jenny was able to give her mother more assistance in all her work than most girls of her age could have done, and earned for herself a great deal of praise and of hearty liking. It was not very easy to win praise from Mrs. Carter. She was herself so very skillful and particular in every thing she did, and had so little the habit of making excuses for people slower or less skillful than herself, that few girls of Jenny's age could have satisfied

her. Jenny and she got on excellently; and although Jenny soon found out that Mrs. Carter's temper was quick, and her rule very imperious, yet, as Jenny was both by nature and habit docile and gentle, as well as active, there were very few quarrels or causes of quarrel between them.

Mrs. Carter had been married before, and had a little boy about five years old, a stirring, mischievous, little fellow, smart and quick-tempered like his mother, who gave Jenny a great deal of trouble, but of whom she was so fond that she counted it among the pleasant things of her new life to have him for a companion, to look after and take care of.

Jenny's new life was, indeed, in every way a very busy one, and she liked it the better on that account. When her grandmother heard how all day and every day was passed by her darling girl, she was not quite satisfied, for she thought that Jenny ought to

have been kept at school for a year or two longer. But Jenny was one of those girls who like work much better than school; and as she could read and write well, and cast up accounts very tolerably, she thought it no hardship to spend more time over the washing-tub, or in cleaning the house, than over her books. Even to herself, she never thought of complaining on account of the hard work required of her, or of the amount of trouble and pains it cost her to give satisfaction to her very particular mother. Nor, although she sometimes felt it keenly, did she murmur over the absence of that gentleness and tenderness to which she had been accustomed in her grandmother's. She was a cheerful-hearted girl, who could make the best of every thing, and sensible enough to know that she could not expect to find every one alike, and that she ought to be well content and grateful for that real kindness and affection which she received from her step-mother,

hasty and rough as her manner sometimes was.

But there was one thing to which Jenny could not reconcile herself, and that was the absence of all religion in the daily life of her new home. Mr. and Mrs. Carter attended church once every Sabbath, and made no objection to Jenny's going twice, nor to her attending the clergyman's Bible class on the Wednesday evenings; but no other token did they give that they knew of or acknowledged the existence of the God who made them, and who demanded from them love, reverence, and obedience. On the first night, Jenny was so worn out with fatigue, and so stupefied with sleepiness, that she did not remark the want of family worship; and even the next morning, when the recollection flashed through her mind, she was quite satisfied with the supposition that her father and mother had thought that she was too weary and sleepy to be able to join their devotions.

But when she saw the family sit down to breakfast without even asking a blessing upon their food, and her father leave the house the moment he rose from the table, her surprise and dismay were very great. She had been so accustomed to her grandmother and Uncle John looking upon family prayer as a necessary part of the day's work, that she could not believe this omission could arise from any thing except mere forgetfulness at the moment; and, after waiting a minute, expecting that her father would recollect and return, or that her mother would recall and remind him, she resolved to do so herself. She ran after him, plucked him by the coat, and said, softly, —

"Father, have not you forgotten? We have not had family worship."

He started and colored a little, and, after a moment's pause, kissing her, said with some confusion, and, as she thought, sadness of manner, —

"Ah, Jenny, darling, we are not like grandmother. We don't think much about these things here. More's the pity;" and turning away, he walked on, nor could she ever afterwards get more from him upon the subject.

CHAPTER III.

A HOME WITHOUT RELIGION.

THE first surprise of this discovery of her parent's disregard of God's worship, of course, wore off in time; but time only increased the sorrow it gave her. Her grandmother had accustomed her to refer every thing to God, to take every joy or sorrow from him, and to perform every little duty as in his sight and to please him. It was very grievous to live with those who had no thought of God, and who never seemed, from morning to night, to recollect that there was a God whom they were bound to love and serve. And this was all the more grievous to her, that she really loved both father and mother very dearly, and was most earnestly grateful to them for their love and kindness to her.

At first, she feared that the ungodliness of the household might have an evil influence upon her own heart. She knew herself to be an ignorant child, who needed some one to teach her what was right, and to remind her to keep near to God; and she looked forward with dread to spending her life among those who did not care whether she loved God, and who would never speak of him to her, or watch over her, as her grandmother had done, to see that she did not forget him, or turn aside from his ways. But this fear did not last long. She recollected that her grandmother had told her to trust in the Lord with all her heart, at all times, in all circumstances; and that she had said that God would never bring her into sin; and the recollection gave her the greatest comfort.

"It may be God's will that I should have no one to speak to about himself," she thought; "but it can never be his will that I should forget him, or be careless about

him; and if he gives me no one else to help me, to keep me right, he will do it himself by his blessed Spirit." And so, praying to him continually for guidance and teaching, trusting to him entirely and alone, the Lord kept her heart warm and full of love; he gave her a more joyous sense of his presence and blessing than she had ever known before, and made her more than ever anxious to please him in every act of her life, — more than ever afraid of sinning against him.

That her father and mother and little Johnnie should be brought to know and love God was her daily prayer, — her constant desire. She did not venture to say much to Mrs. Carter; but to her father she did now and then speak, timidly and tearfully, telling him how happy religion made both herself and her dear grandmother. She always received the same answer, "We are not like grandmother. More's the pity;" and, although

he was constantly ready to listen to her with the utmost kindness, she did not feel that she could do much for him.

For Johnnie she had more hopes. Although such a stirring, active, little fellow, he liked dearly to hear stories, and was always ready to listen to any thing Jenny chose to tell him. She tried to find, at least, one time every day for speaking to him of Christ, and of his love for sinners; and, as she took great pains to make her little lessons simple and interesting, Johnnie generally listened to them with attention and pleasure.

She was not sure that his mother quite liked her teaching the little boy these things. Sometimes she watched them with a kind of dissatisfied expression; and sometimes, when angry, she made very bitter speeches of and to Jenny about people who pretended to be very religious, and thought themselves better than their neighbors. But Johnnie was

such a troublesome little fellow, and so apt to get into mischief, that his mother felt really little inclined to oppose any amusement or teaching which could keep him quiet for ever so short a time of the day; and so long as she did not forbid her to teach Johnnie, Jenny bore all her sneers and sarcasms with beautiful patience and good temper. Her heart was set upon doing all she could to bring her dear little brother to know and love the Lord, and she was willing to suffer far more than she was ever called upon to bear for that end.

Thus the spring, summer, and autumn passed quietly away. To Jenny, except for the grief of her father's disregard of his God, they passed very happily. In the end of autumn, a baby girl was born to the house. Jenny's interest and delight in her new sister were intense, and every spare minute was given to nursing her. She was so careful, and handled the little thing so tenderly, that

JENNY AND THE BABY.

even Mrs. Carter, although anxious and fidgety enough about the baby, as about every thing else, was satisfied, and when it was not in her own arms, was well pleased to see it in Jenny's. The child seemed, indeed, a new tie between Jenny and her mother; and for the first few weeks after its birth, every thing seemed brighter and happier than ever.

When the baby was about four weeks old, however, a cloud arose, which threatened to bring sore grief upon poor Jenny. The rich man of the neighborhood was Sir John Ogilvie. Mrs. Carter had been housemaid in his family before her first marriage, and had been greatly prized as a smart, active, thoroughly good servant. Upon her return to the neighborhood as Mrs. Carter, Lady Ogilvie and her daughters had shown her not a little kindness and attention; and as the housekeeper, and several other of the servants then at the Hall, had been there

when she was, there was a great deal of intercourse between them. The servants came and went frequently to the cottage. Mrs. Carter paid them visits at the Hall; and very often, when they were more than usually busy, gave them some hours' assistance in their work for old acquaintance' sake.

One afternoon, Mrs. Brown, the housekeeper, called to see Mrs. Carter and her baby; and, after admiring the child, she said, laughingly, that she did not much rejoice in its existence just then, as they should have liked very much to have had Mrs. Carter's help in the next day's washing. The farmer's wife at the home-farm had asked all the servants to a tea drinking in the end of the week, and Mrs. Brown was anxious that they should get quickly on with their work, so as to allow as many as possible to go.

"I can not leave baby, to be sure," said Mrs. Carter; "but if Jenny could be of any use, I am sure she would be glad to help

you; and you can't think what a clever, handy girl she is."

Jenny, proud of her mother's praises, and of being thought of use, was very glad to promise to do what she could, and, next morning early, made her appearance at the Hall. The day was a very pleasant one to her. The servants made a great deal of her, — praised her only too highly, she thought, for her smartness, willingness, and industry; and when she came away at night, Mrs. Brown gave her a large basket heavily laden with dainties of different kinds for her mother and Johnnie. Jenny was greatly pleased, and went into the cottage with her present in high spirits.

"See what a great roll of fresh butter!" she cried, triumphantly, as she displayed her treasures; "and you like fresh butter so much, mother, and grudge to buy it!"

"Grudge! I should think so," Mrs. Carter said, laughing, as she carried off the but-

ter to put it in a cool place in the pantry Jenny followed her.

"Wasn't it kind of Lady Ogilvie to bid Mrs. Brown give it me! I dare say she thought you might like such things, just now, when you are not quite strong. I met Lady Ogilvie in the avenue, and I'd have made bold to thank her, if she had spoken to me; but she did not see me."

"And just as well," Mrs. Carter cried, with a sudden change of tone, and turning round upon Jenny. "Thank her, indeed! Why, child, you don't suppose Lady Ogilvie knows any thing of my getting these things!"

"Does not know!" Jenny repeated, utterly bewildered. "Why, then, how can Mrs. Brown give them to you?"

"She can't pay a person like me in money," Mrs. Carter said, with a toss of her head; "and she gives me little things like these, just in a compliment like. You

don't think that I'd go slaving myself all day for them for nothing?"

Jenny was silent for a minute, utterly stupefied with the shock of such a disclosure.

"But, mother," she cried, at last, "it is not honest. These are not Mrs. Brown's things to give. It is only just stealing."

"Stealing, indeed!" Mrs. Carter interrupted, her face flushing scarlet with anger; "and, pray, what right has a little chit like you to use such words of Mrs. Brown? You'll be charging me with stealing next, for taking what is given me!"

In her heart, Jenny had already brought the charge; and her only answer was a sorrowful, wistful look, which seemed to offend her mother more than words could have done. Very angrily, she bade Jenny go up-stairs and take off her bonnet, adding, with great heat,—

"And you mind your own business, and

leave your betters to mind theirs without your help."

Jenny obeyed in silence, utterly cast down, and grieved to the heart at what had occurred. She felt as if part of the guilt rested on herself, in that she had brought away the goods; and could get no peace until she had knelt down beside her little bed, and spread out the whole matter before God. She asked him to teach her what she ought to do, and, with perfect trust that he would do so, could leave the matter with him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREAT TRIAL.

Her mother said no more about the business, but for some days she was cold and distant in her manner towards Jenny; and, with the feeling that she was angry with her, joined to the fear of being told to go to the Hall again, the child was very unhappy. Her father was from home at the time. He was a very skillful carpenter, and Sir John Ogilvie had taken him to his other estate in a distant county, to superintend some alterations making in the house. Jenny had to bear all her mother's crossness and unkindness alone; and had she not been sustained by the sense of God's presence and sympathy, her heart must have sunk under a trial so new to her. But she had so well

learned the lesson of taking every sorrow as from the hands of a loving Father, that she could not be quite cast down. She kept constantly reminding herself that He knew every thing, great and small, that happened to her, and would most certainly order all things aright; and when greatly dreading the arrival of any of the servants to ask for her help, and in doubts as to what she ought to do, she encouraged herself with the thought that the Lord would see to this also, — would show her what was right, and help her to do it. It must ever be God's will to keep her from sin, — of that she was sure, and in that lay her comfort. Then, after a week or so, Jenny's great gentleness, meekness, and care to please, seemed to work upon her mother's feelings. She began to forget the cause of quarrel, and to be nearly as kind as she had been before; and Jenny looked upon this pleasant change as a special gift from her loving God in heaven,

and rejoiced in it accordingly with all her heart.

This had not, however, lasted many days, before what Jenny so dreaded came to pass. One afternoon, when she came home from an errand to the village, Mrs. Carter told her that Mrs. Brown had been down to ask her to go the day after the next to help in making some apple-ginger, and other preserves, and that she had promised that she should go. Jenny said nothing at the time, for Johnnie was in the room; and, besides, she wished to lay the case before the Lord, and ask for counsel and strength from him, before she made up her mind, or told her mother what she meant to do. But in the evening, when she and Mrs. Carter were alone, after an earnest prayer to God for help, she, with great modesty but great firmness, told her mother that she should be glad to help Mrs. Brown whenever she wished her to do so, but that if Mrs. Brown

offered to give her any thing to bring home, she should certainly refuse to bring it.

Now, Mrs. Carter did not really set any great value upon the dainties she received from the Hall; but she could not bear contradiction, particularly from Jenny, who had hitherto been so submissive. Her conscience telling her that Jenny was right and she wrong only made her more angry; and working herself by degrees into a perfect fury, as she found that she could not shake the girl's resolution, she in the end told her that she must either do as she bade her, or leave her house.

"I'm going to my brother's to-morrow," she ended with saying, as she rose to leave the room, "and I meant to take you with me. He is to send a carriage for us, and I thought it would be a nice time for you. But now that you have shown yourself such an ungrateful, wicked, disobedient child, you shall stay at home by yourself; and mark

my words: if you are not ready to-morrow night, when I come home, to promise to obey me, out of my house you go that minute. I'll keep no sinful, disobedient children here, to set my boy a bad example, and teach him to despise his parents. So you either do as I bid you, or go to your precious grandmother or to your father, as you like."

She spoke in a passion, hardly knowing what she said, and had no intention of fulfilling her threat, whatever Jenny might do. But poor Jenny, supposing her to be thoroughly in earnest, believed that her only choice lay between doing what she knew to be wrong and being turned out of doors. She did not hesitate, for she felt that she could not sin against God. But her heart was very sore at the thought of parting from her mother in anger; of leaving the children; and, above all, of being sent away without seeing her father again, — without knowing when she might ever see him. He

might be angry, too, and never wish to have her back; and what should she do, how should she bear it, if he or her mother never forgave her, — never loved her again as they had done?

At first, this sorrow completely filled her heart, and left no room for thoughts about her plans for the long journey before her. But when she had lightened her load of grief by telling it all to her God, — when she had so far quieted herself as to be able to go to bed, and to rest herself again upon the sense of God's presence, love, and care, she began to think of what she must do, and how she was to do it. The long, long journey to her grandmother's must be made on foot, for she had no money; and she trembled as she asked herself where or how she should get food and lodging during the many days and nights which must pass before she could reach her old home.

"But I am to trust in the Lord with all

my heart," she said, "and he will provide;" and quieting herself again with the thought, she fell asleep.

She rose very early and went down-stairs to get breakfast ready for her mother and the children before they started on their day's excursion. She took more pains than usual to put every thing exactly right; and when Mrs. Carter came down, her anger more than half gone already, she felt touched to the heart by Jenny's attention, and by her meek, submissive manner. She did not speak to her, hardly even looked at her, but the old liking was returning. Her anger kept melting fast away; and at the last moment, when they were driving off, she looked quickly back to give the poor girl a kindly look and smile as of old. Jenny did not see it; she had turned into the house to indulge in a good fit of crying.

She soon dried her tears, for she had little time to waste. Mrs. Carter had said that

she should turn her out the moment she came home; and as Jenny felt sure that she ought not to change her resolution, she believed it would be best to go away at once, and spare Mrs. Carter the pain of bidding her go. She put the house into beautiful order, made up the fire to last all day, and laid out the supper all ready for them when they should come home, and then set about her own preparations. She knew she could not carry a large bundle, so she chose out only one suit of clothes, and tied them up with her Bible in one of her aprons. Mrs. Carter had set aside a good, comfortable dinner and supper for Jenny, and this she supposed she had a right to take with her. But a half-crown, which she had earned by making some articles of dress for the young ladies at the Hall, and which her mother had meant she should have to spend as she liked, she could not take, because it had never been exactly given to her. She

wrapped it up in a piece of paper, and wrote in the inside,—

"DEAR MOTHER,—Forgive me for going away. I can't do what you wish; and I have gone to grandmother's at once, that you may not have the pain of sending me away. Ever your loving daughter,

"JENNY CARTER."

She placed the little parcel where it should catch Mrs. Carter's eye; and, with another look to see that all was right, she went sorrowfully out of the house. She locked the door, hid the key where it was always put when they happened to be all out, and set out on her journey.

She took a back path to avoid the people of the village, and made her way to the great north road, which she knew was the right direction to her grandmother's. Poor child! she knew very little about her road; but she remembered the names of a few of the towns through which she had passed in coming, and she hoped to be able to ask the way to them. The day was bright, clear,

and cool, and, until the afternoon, she got on very briskly, with an hour's rest for dinner about mid-day. As she had been accustomed to run about all day long in her work, she had fancied that she should be able to walk on until dark, when she hoped to find a cart-shed or hay-rick under whose shelter she might pass the night. But to walk straight on on a hard road is much more fatiguing than to go about household work; and the sun was still far from setting when Jenny found her limbs ache so much, her feet so hot and heavy, that she was forced to admit that she could not go much farther. She sat down to think what she should do.

The spot was wild and dreary. For a long way, both before and behind, the road stretched straight on without a turn, and there was no house within sight. The weather had changed. Gray clouds hid the sun, and a cold wind blew round her. As

she sat, trembling with cold, faint with weariness, she thought with terror of passing the night out in the open air; and this would be only the first night of many. A mile-stone near her told her that she had got only fourteen miles on her road. She did not know the exact distance she had to travel; but the coach with its four horses had taken more than twelve hours to come, and she remembered that the coachman had said they never went less than ten miles an hour. It did not require much calculation to find out that many weary days and nights were before her, and she trembled at the thought.

"But I am to trust in the Lord with all my heart," she said, aloud. "I am doing the thing that is right, and the Lord will be my Shepherd; I shall never want."

"Right, my little maid," cried a cheery voice behind her. She started, and looked round. She had not observed that, on the

other side of the wall against which she sat, a foot-path led through the fields. Neither had she, being busy with her own thoughts, heard a step coming along this path, until the passenger was so near as to hear what she said. He was a tall, elderly man, dressed like a farmer, and with a very pleasant countenance. He stepped over the wall, and stood beside her.

"Right, my little maid," he said again; "and why is it that you have just now to put yourself in mind to trust in the Lord with all your heart? Why are you here alone?"

Jenny shyly explained that she had to go to her grandmother's, far away, and that there was no one to go with her. The kind farmer saw that his questions about her friends distressed her, for Jenny was determined to tell no one how her mother had treated her; and, well satisfied by the words he had overheard that she was on no wrong

errand, he asked no more on that point. He asked where her grandmother lived.

"At Hollow's Edge," said Jenny, innocently. But when she saw him smile and shake his head, as if there might be many a Hollow's Edge in the world, she said, "Away beyond ——," naming a town between thirty and forty miles from her father's house.

"Ah," he said heartily, "I can take you ten miles on that road. My gig is waiting for me at the inn, a little bit farther on, and I can take you home, where my wife will give you a good supper and a comfortable bed, and you can start in the morning fresh."

Jenny accepted his offer with gratitude, earnest and deep to him, but still more earnest and deep to the God who had sent him to help her. The ten miles were quickly and easily got over; and, as he had promised, a good supper and a comfortable bed were pro-

vided for her by his wife, as kind and good as himself. In the morning they gave her breakfast, and packed up a good supply of bread and meat for her dinner. The farmer walked a little way with her to show her the road, and, on parting, insisted on giving her half-a-crown to pay for her bed that night. He was greatly interested in the child, and would have given her enough to take her home by the coach, had he not supposed that her grandmother's house was only a little beyond the town she had named, and that she should be able to reach it by the next forenoon at the farthest.

CHAPTER V.

JENNY'S LONG JOURNEY.

I CAN not tell you all the adventures Jenny met with, nor how many kind friends God raised up for her. On the third morning, she came up with a carrier's cart, which was going about forty miles on her road. The carrier offered to take her for a shilling; and although that swallowed up a great part of the half-crown, she was getting so weary that she thought the long rest would be well worth the shilling to her. She had no reason to regret her bargain. The carrier was a kind man, and took as great a fancy to her as the farmer and his wife had done. He shared all his meals with her, so that she had not to buy food for herself; and traveling all night in the wagon, no money was spent for lodging. When he found out how poor she was, he

wished not to take her shilling; but Jenny's scrupulous honesty could not be satisfied without giving it to him; and he paid it back by taking her to the house of a friend, — a good, pious, old woman, — who lodged and fed the poor child that Saturday night and all the Sabbath free from charge.

On setting out again upon the Monday, a sore misfortune befell her. She mistook her road, went out of the right way, and for many days wandered about the country, not knowing where she was. God raised up many kind people to befriend her, and many a night's lodging and many a meal was freely given to her. But still, as day passed after day, her small store of money was slowly expended, and her strength and power of walking melted away with it; until at last, when she found herself again in the right road, and only sixteen miles from Hollow's Edge, she had not a farthing left, and was so weak and weary that it seemed impossible she

could ever walk so far. Very slow and painful was her journey this day, for her weakness was increasing fast upon her, and it was almost dark when she reached a farm-house still eight miles from her home. Here she supposed her difficulties were at last over. The farmer and his wife were old friends of her grandmother's. She was sure they would welcome her very kindly, take good care of her, and send her home on the morrow. But, alas, poor Jenny! sickness and death had been busy in that house since she last saw it. The father and mother were dead, the family broken up; and as no one had yet taken the farm, the house was empty, — the whole place desolate.

Poor Jenny's heart gave way at last, and she sat down on the steps of the empty house, and cried as bitterly as she had strength to cry. After a little, the fast-increasing darkness and coldness warned her to rise and seek some other shelter; and, as she rose, the old

ground of comfort and strength came back to her mind.

"I trust the Lord with all my heart," she said; "he knows that I have found no one here. He is beside me, and he orders every thing for the best."

As she thus strengthened her heart in the Lord, creeping slowly and wearily round the house, she came upon a cart-shed, whose door stood open, and going in, she found a large bundle of hay in one corner. She laid herself down upon it, and drew some over her; and so weary was she, that, in the very act of thanking God for the shelter and warmth he had provided, she fell fast asleep.

She awoke next morning stiff and sore in every limb; and still more slowly, still more painfully, than on the day before, did she again proceed on her weary walk. The country was very wild. There were few houses by the roadside; and although now so near home, not one person that she knew did

she meet with all day. A scanty meal she got about mid-day from a laboring man, who, pitying her hungry looks, gave her as much as he could spare from his own not too plentiful dinner.

Towards the afternoon, her troubles were greatly increased by a snow-storm which came on, accompanied by a strong, bitter wind, against which the poor girl could hardly make way at all. It was quite night when she got to the inn where she and her Uncle John had met the coach which took her to her father's. The people at this inn bore such a bad character that Jenny had never hoped much from them. But when she came up, such loud, angry voices were heard through the half-open door that she was glad to step quietly past without even looking in. An ostler, coming round from the stable, looked hard at her, and even called after her; but she did not observe, did not heed him, and went on and into the wood which stretch-

ed in a nearly unbroken line to the foot of Hollow's Edge.

The snow was more her enemy here than before. It had drifted in among the trees, and lay in some places so deep that she could hardly wade through it with her poor, weary feet; and the wind, roaring up the cross passages, blew the snow round her in such whirling, confusing eddies, that she soon lost all distinct knowledge of the direction in which she was going. She now gave up the hope of reaching home, and, utterly exhausted, lay down upon the ground, careless where she was, or how she should ever get up again. A strange feeling ran through all her body, and an overpowering sleepiness crept over her. She believed that she was going to die.

"But I am trusting in thee, Lord, with all my heart," she thought, smiling in the comfort of thus resting upon God. "Thou wilt either take care of me here, or take care of me to heaven; and I'll see my own dear

mother there, if I can't see grandmother here. I wish that father and mother had forgiven me, first; but I trust God for that, too. It'll be all right in the end."

Her eyes had closed, her senses were nearly gone, when a loud shout partly roused her. She half opened her eyes, and saw a bright light coming down the wood. Her mind was confused and wandering, and she watched the light with a kind of dreamy pleasure. Nearer it came. It fell upon herself as she lay on the snow. A voice she knew cried with great tenderness, "My Jenny, my darling!" and she felt herself raised and pressed in kind, strong arms. She fancied that she must be dead, must be in heaven; and murmuring feebly, "Is it you, mother? Oh, how good God is," her head fell upon her father's shoulder, and she became quite unconscious.

For days, her father and uncle had been seeking her all over the country. Mrs. Car-

ter had been in great alarm when she came home and found Jenny's little note. She went as early as she could next morning with it to her husband, willing to bear all his anger, if only Jenny could be found. They went together to her grandmother's, but, as we know, she was not there. After some days of seeking and inquiries all along the road, William Carter had, the day before, gone back to his own home to see if there might be news of her there, and, finding none, had returned by the coach, which had set him down at the inn a few minutes after Jenny had passed. Every one in the neighborhood knew that the child was lost; and the ostler who had seen her at once told the father his idea that it was she who had gone into the wood a few minutes before. Her bundle had fallen from her hand soon after she had entered the wood; her father had found it and it had guided him to where she lay upon the cold snow, very near death.

When Jenny awoke to consciousness, she found herself upon a warm, soft bed in her grandmother's kitchen, — her grandmother bending over her.

"Where am I? What has happened?" she asked feebly. But her grandmother would not suffer her to speak. She put a cup of warm arrow-root, with some medicine, into her hand, and bade her drink it. Jenny obeyed. It tasted very good, and sent a pleasant heat all over her body. With a sigh of comfort, she stretched her sore, weary limbs upon the soft, warm bed, and closed her eyes when her grandmother bade her do so and although she thought she heard strange voices speaking about her, and a bustle in the room, she was too weak to wonder, too comfortable to care, and presently fell fast asleep.

When next she awoke, the room was darkened, and the curtains were drawn round her bed. Again she began to wonder where she

was. A slight rustle beside her made her draw back the curtain. To her extreme surprise, she saw her grandmother and her mother sitting beside the fire, her father close to her own bed. Instantly the past flashed back upon her mind.

"Oh, father," she cried piteously, "are you angry with me?"

"Angry with you, my pet lamb!" was all he could say, as he folded her in his arms, and laid her head down upon his shoulder. For a minute, she lay there perfectly happy in the assurance of his love, and thanking God with all her heart that he had kept her father from being angry. Then, as she remembered that her mother had only turned away her head, and had not spoken, she said, timidly,—

"And you, mother! Please don't be angry. I was very sorry, but I could not do it."

Her mother turned round upon her a face

wet with tears, and with an expression of such deep humility and sorrow, that Jenny's tender heart ached for her.

"Oh, hush, Jenny, if ye wouldn't break my heart!" she cried passionately. "God knows I never meant to turn you out; but as it is, I can never forgive myself, and he (with a look at her husband) can never forgive me."

"Yes, he can — he does," said the old woman, as she came forward and laid her hand upon her son's shoulder. He turned away his head, and did not speak. His heart was yet bitter against his wife. Jenny saw it, and raised herself in bed.

"Oh, father, father!" she cried, "ye are not angry with mother? Oh, ye can't be angry when God has brought us together again, and taken such care of me. Oh, father, don't anger the Lord now when he has been so good;" and the tears ran down her cheeks as she repeated, in her feeble,

broken voice, "Oh, don't anger the Lord, father! Oh, father, love her all the same!" Her father could not resist her. His heart was softened in that moment of great joy, and he held out his hand to his wife. All was forgiven, and by him the subject was never opened again.

Jenny could not rise from her bed for many days, but she had the kindest and tenderest of nurses in her illness. Her grandmother was devoted to her; and her step-mother, softened, subdued, so that Jenny hardly knew her to be the same woman, seemed to live only to serve and wait upon Jenny and her grandmother.

"Oh, dear grandmother," cried Jenny, one day, when she and the old woman were talking of all that had passed, "what a joy it is to trust God with all the heart! I trusted him to keep me loving himself, when I had not you to teach me, and he did it. I trusted him to take care of me, and he did it, — all

the long, weary way, he did it. I trusted him to take anger out of dear father's and mother's heart, and he did it. And now I am trusting him to bring them to himself, and I know he will do it."

She supposed that she and her grandmother were alone; but young Mrs. Carter sat nursing her baby behind the bed; and the first time Jenny's grandmother left her, her mother came up, and, bending down, said in a trembling voice, —

"Jenny, darling, the Lord will do it. The Lord is doing it. Thy father reads the Bible now. And for me," tears running down her cheeks, "how can I help seeking the Lord, who took care of you, and took the sin of murder off my conscience?"

I leave my little friends to imagine how joyfully Jenny praised the Lord who had made her trust him, and had thus answered all her wishes.

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JESSIE'S HYACINTH.

Jessie Burns had several plants growing in pots on the window, — a fuchsia, a heliotrope, a tea-rose, and a bridal daisy, — but the most cherished of all was a hyacinth, which was in a beautiful purple vase. She had bought the bulb and the vase with her own money, at a seed-store, in November; had filled the vase with pure water, a little warmed, then placed the bulb, which looked exactly like a little dried onion, in it, and set it in a south window where it would catch the sunshine.

In a few days, little white roots began to appear at the bottom of the bulb; these grew longer every day, till the vase was quite filled with the thread-like roots. Jessie changed

the water once in two weeks; but, after a month's watching, she began to grow impatient, and to wonder why no green shoots showed themselves.

"It is a real stupid old thing!" she said, one day. "I should think 'twould be ashamed to look so dry and ugly on top, when it has got such lots of roots! What are they good for, if it never puts out leaves and flowers? I am half a mind to throw it away; it isn't a bit pretty, and everybody said it would be so beautiful! Oh, dear! I wish I had spent my money for something else;" and she was ready to cry with vexation.

"Be patient, my little daughter," said Mrs. Burns; "by and by it will send up a green shaft containing the flowers, which will be both beautiful and fragrant."

But Jessie looked at it with pouting lips, and said she wished it would be about it then; she didn't believe it ever would; it

was just as dry and brown as it was the day she got it.

Meantime the poor abused hyacinth was doing its very best. Within that homely cover, wonderful processes were going on; those thread-like roots absorbed and carried nourishment to the center of the bulb, and its heart had grown warm with a mysterious life; every fiber felt the strange thrill, and laid aside its torpor; every little cell, of which it had hundreds, had its work to do; not one was idle; and, by their joint labor, a little plant was in time completed, perfect in every part. Within a tiny green bud, was packed away layer upon layer of tinted leaves of the most exquisite hue; and, when all was ready, this tiny green bud was pushed up into light through a small opening at the top of the bulb.

"Oh, it's green, mother, it's green, — it will grow now!" shouted Jessie, in an ecstasy of delight.

And grow it did; the bud parted into six broad green leaves, and among them lay nestled little flower-buds just tipped with pink. These gradually opened, till at length ten lovely blossoms hung like graceful little bells from the tall flower-stalk, filling the room with fragrance. Everybody admired it; everybody said, "What exquisite color! what delicious perfume!"

Jessie's little heart was overflowing with joy and gladness, and she exclaimed, "It wanted to have roots before it had flowers, didn't it, mother?"

"Yes, dear, — first roots, then leaves, then blossoms. Just so it is with fair and lovely heart-flowers: there must be a silent, unobserved growth, down deep in the soul, before we can see the beautiful blossoms on the surface, scattering fragrance and blessedness all around them; we must be patient and wait quietly for the seeds we plant to root." And as she stroked the soft curls back from her

little daughter's brow, her heart grew warm with faith, and the sweet trust that many a fair plant was taking root in that young soul to bloom for evermore, though the time seemed long since some of the seeds were sown, and as yet no greenness or beauty showed they were not perished.

"They will yet spring up and blossom, and bear fruit," said the hopeful mother, "and fill many hearts with joy and sunshine, and at last make glad the city of our God."

THE END

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